An Exhortation & Caution TO FRIENDS Concerning buying or keeping of Negroes.

SEeing our Lord Jesus Christ hath tasted Death for every Man, and given himself a Ransom for all, to be testified in due time, and that his Gospel of *Peace*, Liberty and Redemption from Sin, Bondage and all Oppression, is freely to be preached unto all, without Exception, and that *Negroes*, *Blacks* and *Taunies* are a real part of Mankind, for whom Christ hath shed his precious Blood, and are capable of Salvation, as well as *White Men*; and Christ the Light of the World hath (in measure) enlightened them, and every Man that cometh into the World; and that all such who are sincere *Christians* and true Believers in Christ Jesus, and Followers of him, bear his Image, and are made conformable unto him in Love, Mercy, Goodness and Compassion, who came not to destroy mens Lives, but to save them, nor to bring any part of Mankind into outward Bondage, Slavery or Misery, nor yet to detain them, or hold them therein, but to ease and deliver the Oppressed and Distressed, and bring into Liberty both inward and outward.

Therefore we judge it neccſſary that all faithful Friends ſhould diſcover themſelves to be true *Chriſtians* by having the Fruits of the Spirit of Chriſt, which are *Love, Mercy, Goodneſs, and Compaſſion* towards all in Miſery, and that ſuffer Oppreſſion and ſevere Uſage, ſo far as in them is poſſible to eaſe and relieve them, and ſet them free of their hard Bondage, whereby it may be hoped, that many of them will be gained by their beholding theſe good Works of ſincere *Chriſtians*, and prepared thereby, through the Preaching the Goſpel of Chriſt, to imbrace the true Faith of Chriſt. And for this cauſe it is, as we judge, that in ſome places in *Europe* Negroes cannot be bought and ſold for Money, or detained to be Slaves, becauſe it ſuits not with the Mercy, Love & Clemency that is eſſential to *Chriſtianity*, nor to the Doctrine of Chriſt, nor to the Liberty the Goſpel calleth all men unto, to whom it is preached. And to buy Souls and Bodies of men for Money, to enſlave them and their Poſterity to the end of the World, we judge is a great hinderance to the ſpreading of the Goſpel, and is occaſion of much War, Violence, Cruelty and Oppreſſion, and Theft & Robery of the higheſt Nature; for commonly the Negroes that are ſold to white Men, are either ſtollen away or robbed from their Kindred, and to buy ſuch is the way to continue theſe evil Practices of Man-ſtealing, and tranſgreſſeth that Golden Rule and Law, *To do to others what we would have others do to us.*

Therefore, in true *Chriſtian Love*, we earneſtly recommend it to all our Friends and Brethren, Not to buy any Negroes, unleſs it were on purpoſe to ſet them free, and that ſuch who have bought any, and have them at preſent, after ſome reaſonable time of moderate Service they have had of them, or may have of them, that may reaſonably anſwer to the Charge of what they have laid out, eſpecially in keeping

Negroes

Negroes Children born in their House, or taken into their House, when under Age, that after a reasonable time of service to answer that Charge, they may set them at Liberty, and during the time they have them, to teach them to read, and give them a Christian Education.

Some Reasons and Causes of our being against keeping of Negroes for Term of Life.

First, Because it is contrary to the Principles and Practice of the *Christian Quakers* to buy Prize or stollen Goods, which we bore a faithful Testimony against in our Native Country; and therefore it is our Duty to come forth in a Testimony against stollen Slaves, it being accounted a far greater Crime under *Moses*'s Law than the stealing of Goods; for such were only to restore four fold, *but he that stealeth a Man and selleth him, if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to Death, Exod.* 21. 16. Therefore as we are not to buy stollen Goods, (but if at unawares it should happen through Ignorance, we are to restore them to the Owners, and seek our Remedy of the Thief) no more are we to buy stollen Slaves; neither should such as have them keep them and their Posterity in perpetual Bondage and Slavery, as is usually done, to the great scandal of the *Christian Profession.*

Secondly, Because Christ commanded, saying, *All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them.* Therefore as we and our Children would not be kept in perpetual Bondage and Slavery against our Consent, neither should we keep them in perpetual Bondage and Slavery against their Consent, it being such intollerable Punishment to their Bodies and Minds, that none but noto-

rious Criminal Offendors deſerve the ſame. But theſe have done us no harme; therefore how inhumane is it in us ſo grievouſly to oppreſs them and their Children from one Generation to another.

Thirdly, Becauſe the Lord hath commanded, ſaying, *Thou ſhalt not deliver unto his Maſter the Servant that is eſcaped from his Maſter unto thee, he ſhall dwell with thee, even amongſt you in that place which he ſhall chuſe in one of thy Gates, where it liketh him beſt; thou ſhalt not oppreſs him*, Deut. 23. 15, 16. By which it appeareth, that thoſe which are at Liberty and freed from their Bondage, ſhould not by us be delivered into Bondage again, neither by us ſhould they be oppreſſed, but being eſcaped from his Maſter, ſhould have the liberty to dwell amongſt us, where it liketh him beſt. Therefore, if God extend ſuch Mercy under the legal Miniſtration and Diſpenſation to poor Servants, he doth and will extend much more of his Grace and Mercy to them under the clear Goſpel Miniſtration; ſo that inſtead of puniſhing them and their Poſterity with cruel Bondage and perpetual Slavery, he will cauſe the Everlaſting Goſpel to be preached effectually to all Nations, to them as well as others; *And the Lord will extend Peace to his People like a River, and the Glory of the* Gentiles *like a flowing Stream*; *And it ſhall come to paſs, ſaith the Lord, that I will gather all Nations and Tongues, and they ſhall come and ſee my Glory, and I will ſet a ſign among them, and I will ſend thoſe that eſcape of them unto the Nations, to* Tarſhiſh, Pull *and* Lud *that draw the Bow to* Tubal *and* Javan, *to the* Iſles *afar off that have not heard my Fame, neither have ſeen my Glory, and they ſhall declare my Glory among the Gentiles*, Iſa. 66. 12. 18.

Fourthly, Becauſe the Lord hath commanded, ſaying, *Thou ſhalt*

shalt not oppress an hired Servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy Brethren, or of the Strangers that are in thy Land within thy Gates, least he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee; Thou shalt neither vex a stranger nor oppress him, for ye were strangers in the Land of Ægypt, *Deut.* 24. 14, 15. *Exod.* 12. 21. But what greater Oppression can there be inflicted upon our Fellow Creatures, than is inflicted on the poor Negroes! they being brought from their own Country against their Wills, some of them being stollen, others taken for payment of Debt owing by their Parents, and others taken Captive in War, and sold to Merchants, who bring them to the *American* Plantations, and sell them for Bond-Slaves to them that will give most for them; the Husband from the Wife, and the Children from the Parents; and many that buy them do exceedingly afflict them and oppress them, not only by continual hard Labour, but by cruel Whippings, and other cruel Punishments, and by short allowance of Food, some Planters in *Barbadoes* and *Jamaica*, 'tis said, keeping one hundred of them, and some more, and some less, and giving them hardly any thing more than they raise on a little piece of Ground appointed them, on which they work for themselves the seventh dayes of the Week in the after-noon, and on the first days, to raise their own Provisions, to wit, Corn and Potatoes, and other Roots, &c. the remainder of their time being spent in their Masters service; which doubtless is far worse usage than is practised by the *Turks* and *Moors* upon their Slaves. Which tends to the great Reproach of the *Christian Profession*; therefore it would be better for all such as fall short of the Practice of those *Infidels*, to refuse the Name of a *Christian*, that those *Heathen* and *Infidels* may not be provoked to blaspheme against the blessed Name of Christ, by reason of the unparallel'd

Cruelty

Cruelty of these cruel and hard hearted pretended *Christians*! Surely the Lord doth behold their Oppressions & Afflictions, and will further visit for the same by his righteous and just Judgments, except they break off their sins by Repentance, and their Iniquity by shewing Mercy to these poor afflicted, tormented miserable Slaves!

Fifthly, Because Slaves and Souls of Men are some of the *Merchandize of Babylon* by which the Merchants of the Earth are made Rich; but those Riches which they have heaped together, through the cruel Oppression of these miserable Creatures, will be a means to draw Gods Judgments upon them; therefore, *Brethren*, let us hearken to the Voice of the Lord, who saith, *Come out of* Babylon, *my People, that ye be not partakers of her Sins, and that ye receive not her Plagues; for her Sins have reached unto Heaven, and God hath remembred her Iniquities; for he that leads into Captivity shall go into Captivity*, Rev. 18. 4, 5. & 13. 10.

Given forth by our Monethly Meeting in Philadelphia, *the 13th day of the 8th Moneth, 1693. and recommended to all our Friends and Brethren, who are one with us in our Testimony for the Lord Jesus Christ, and to all others professing* Christianity.

qu. if by G: Keith Pantry?

THE END.

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